GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:195
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008
CRITICALLY ENDANGERED GHARIYALS
Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 100 ghariyals, declared critically endangered in the 2007 Red list of species by the World Conservation Union, died as reported in "The Times of India" dated January 16, 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereto and reasons therefor;

(c) the number of Ghariyals in the various sanctuaries as on date, sanctuary-wise; and

(d) the steps taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government to save one of the largest surviving habitats?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI S. REGUPATHY)

(a)&(b) As per the information available,around 105 Gharials have been reported dead during the period between 8.12.2007 and 21.2.2008. No particular reason could be attributed to this mortality of Gharials. However, possibility of nephro-toxin entering via the food-chain could not be ruled out.

(c) The reports of the current census of Gharials are not available in the Ministry. However, as per the last census conducted in 2007, the number of Gharials in various Sanctuaries is as given below:

1. National Chambal Sanctuary: - 1457

2. Son Gharial Sanctuary: 106

3. Ken Gharial Sanctuary:- 12

4. Katerniaghat Sanctuary:- 70-80

(d) The Steps taken by the Government to protect Gharial and its habitat include the following:

(i) Important habitats of Gharials like the Chambal River, Gherua River have been declared as Protected Areas.

(ii) Financial & technical assistance is provided to State Governments under centrally Sponsored Schemes for conservation and protection of wildlife including Gharial and their habitat.

(iii) All efforts have been made by the State Governments to stop illegal sand mining thus avoiding any damage to the habitat of Gharials. Further, inter-state collaboration amongst the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are taken up for conservation & management of Gharials and their habitats.

(iv) Gharial has been included in the Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby affording them highest degree of protection.

(v) Breeding of Gharials in captivity has been successfully standardized and as and when required, captive bred Gharials are released in wild also.

(vi) The Ministry of Environment & Forests has constituted a Crisis Management Group to coordinate the efforts in control of Ghariyal mortality.